

City Planning Commission Meeting
Tuesday, July 26, 2016

Public Hearing Deadline: 9/09/16
CPC Deadline: 10/07/16
City Council Deadline: None
City Council Districts: C - Ramsey

PRELIMINARY ALGIERS MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING ZONING STANDARDS STUDY

To: City Planning Commission

Prepared by: Danica Adams

Date: July 12, 2016

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant: City Council Motion No. M-16-212

Request: Request by City Council Motion M-16-212 for the City Planning Commission to conduct a public hearing and study on zoning requirements and standards for multi-family housing in Planning Districts 12 and 13 to ensure quality, affordable and diverse housing options are aligned with the Master Plan. The study should consider whether changes should be made to the Bulk and Yard Regulations in the S-RM1 Suburban Multi-Family Residential District, whether there should be any additional regulations or standards made to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, and whether the current regulations and standards need to be amended, or if any additional supplemental use standards or a new zoning category are necessary to further regulate said use.

Location: The Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study impacts Planning Districts 12 and 13.

Description: The City Planning Commission is directed to conduct a public hearing and study on the zoning requirements and standards for multi-family housing in Planning Districts 12 and 13 to ensure quality, affordable and diverse housing options aligned with the Master Plan as outlined in City Council Motion M-16-212. The City Planning Commission should conduct and complete the study within 120 days of the passage of Motion M-16-212 and conduct a public hearing within 60 days of the passage of the motion.

Why is City Planning Commission action required?

City Council Motion M-16-212 requires the City Planning Commission to hold a public hearing within 60 days of the passage of the motion.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. What is the scope of work for the Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study from City Council Motion M-16-212?

The scope of the Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study is outlined in the motion that directs the City Planning Commission to conduct the study. As stated in the motion, the City Council believes a City Planning Commission study on the zoning requirements and standards for multi-family housing in Planning Districts 12 and 13 may create a multifaceted approach to ensure quality, affordable and diverse housing options which are aligned with the Master Plan.

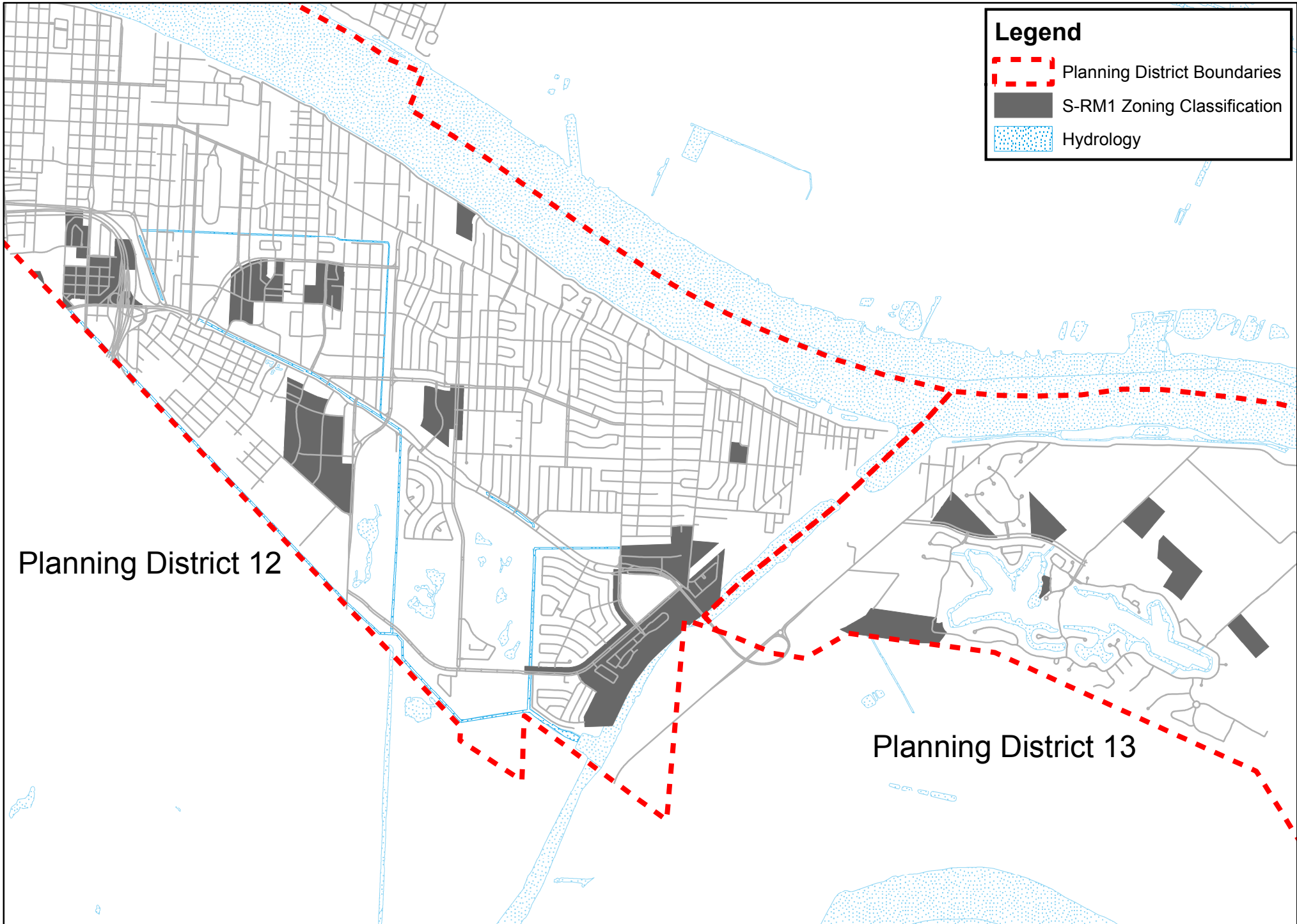
City Council Motion M-16-212 directs the City Planning Commission to include the following subject matter in the study:

1. Whether there should be a change to any Bulk and Yard Regulations in S-RM1;
2. Whether there should be any additional regulations or standards related to design, materials, open space, green space, landscaping, setbacks, common areas and amenities;
3. If the current regulations and standards need to be amended, or if any additional supplemental use standards or a new zoning category are necessary to further regulate said use.

City Council Motion M-16-212 grants the City Planning Commission and its staff the flexibility to expand the scope of the study to make any and all legal and appropriate recommendations deemed necessary in light of the study, review, and public testimony resulting from the motion.

What are the areas impacted by this study?

The Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study impacts the areas currently zoned S-RM1 Multi-Family Residential District in the Planning Districts 12 and 13. These areas are shown in Figure 1 on the following page.



B. What are the current Design Standards such as Bulk and Yard regulations and other standards such as materials, open space, green space, landscaping, setbacks, common areas and amenities that are currently required by the S-RM1 Multi-Family Residential District?

Base Zoning District S-RM1 Multi-Family Residential District

The S-RM1 Multi-Family Residential District is intended to maintain a residential environment that permits a variety of dwelling types. Population density is maintained in the medium range, and multi-family buildings up to four stories are permitted. The district is intended for suburban multi-family areas. Limited non-residential uses such as places of worship that are compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods may be allowed.

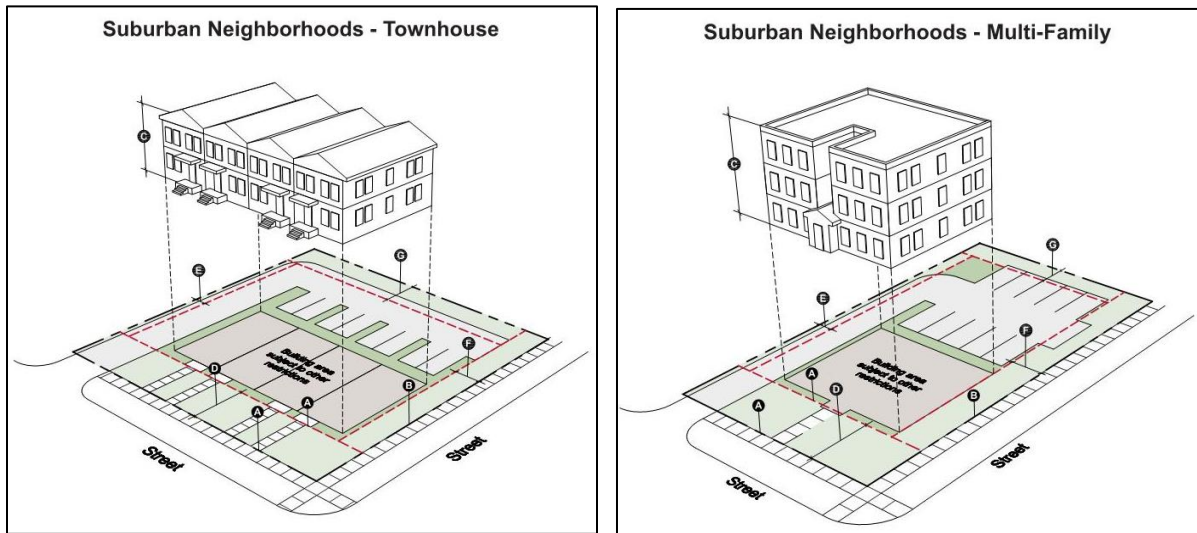
There are a variety of site design standards associated with multi-family residences with 4+ units in this zoning district. These Bulk and Yard regulations, as well as additional design standards, can be found in **Article 13, Section 13.3 Site Design Standards**.

All multi-family dwellings with four or more units, and which are located in the S-RM1 Multi-Family Residential District, must provide at least one thousand two hundred fifty square feet (1,250 sf) of lot area per dwelling unit, and be located on lots which are at a minimum fifty feet (50') wide and ninety feet (90') in depth. The maximum allowable height of all townhouses or multi-family residences of three to four (3-4) units is forty feet (40'), while multi-family residences of five or more units are allowed to build to a height of forty-five feet (45'). There is no minimum height of the first floor of either townhouses or multi-family residences, and there is no maximum building length. In this zoning district, there is no limit to the number of multi-family dwelling units per building, although townhouses are limited to a maximum of six (6) attached units. There is no minimum unit size.

All structures and uses in this zoning district are required to provide at least forty per cent (40%) of the lot area as permeable open space, and all townhouse and multi-family dwellings must provide at least one-hundred twenty square feet (120 sf) of useable on-site open space per dwelling unit. This open space may be either private open space for the dwelling unit or common open space restricted to the use of residents of the townhouse or multi-family dwelling, and is subject to eight standards, discussed in the following paragraph. In addition to these open space requirements, all developments are required to provide at least a twenty foot (20') front yard and a twenty foot (20') rear yard, as well as an interior side yard of three (3) or five (5) feet and a corner side yard of ten feet (10').

There are also very detailed standards regarding the minimum space between multifamily buildings. Buildings must be a minimum of twenty feet (20') apart, side to side, when there is no curb cut access, and forty feet (40') when there is curb cut access. The minimum distance between the side of a building and the rear of an adjacent building is forty feet

(40'), and the minimum distance between the rears of two adjacent buildings is sixty feet (60') for residential façades.



Open Space Requirements

Additional open space requirements which apply to townhouse and multi-family developments in the residential districts of the Suburban Neighborhoods can be found in **Article 13, Sections 13.3A3**. In general, these regulations are concerned with ensuring public or private space for outdoor living, recreation, or landscape. The required open space may be either at or above grade, such as balconies or porches. When it is provided at grade, it is required to be substantially covered with live plants or other amenities such as patios or pools. Parking lots and required parking lot landscaping do not count towards these open space requirements. These standards are listed below.

All townhouse and multi-family dwellings shall provide at least one-hundred twenty (120) square feet of useable on-site open space per dwelling unit. This open space may be either private open space for the dwelling unit or common open space restricted to the use of residents of the townhouse or multi-family dwelling. Such open space shall meet the following requirements:

- a) Required open space shall have a minimum dimension of at least seven (7) feet on any side.
- b) Required open space shall be located on the same lot as the dwelling unit it serves.
- c) Required open space shall be outdoors and designed for outdoor living, recreation, or landscape, including areas located on the ground and areas on decks, balconies, galleries, porches, or roofs. For multi-family dwellings, when open space is above grade, such as a balcony or gallery, it may not be located over on-site surface

parking areas.

- d) The required open space area may not be contiguous, but each open space area, whether common or private, shall comply with minimum dimensional standards of Table 12-2. Common open space areas shall be accessible to all residents of the subject development.
- e) When located at ground level, the required open space area shall be substantially covered with grass, live groundcover, shrubs, plants, trees, or usable outdoor hardscape features or amenities, such as seating areas, patios, or pools.
- f) Off-street parking and loading areas, driveways or required landscape for parking lots and screening do not satisfy open space requirements. Bollards, curbs, wheel stops, or other similar features shall be provided to ensure that required open space areas are not used for off-street parking or any other vehicular use.
- g) Mechanical equipment, dumpsters, or service areas are prohibited in required open space areas.
- h) All required open space areas shall be located and designed to take advantage of sunlight and other climatic advantages of the site.

Building Design Standards

Site design standards which apply to townhouse and multi-family developments in the residential districts of the Suburban Neighborhoods can be found in **Article 13, Section 13.3.B.2**. In general, these regulations are concerned with creating a safe and friendly pedestrian experience both internal and external to the site boundaries, and developing an active and attractive street façade. There are also aesthetic standards regarding allowable building materials. These standards are listed below:

The following building design standards apply to townhouse and multi-family developments in the residential districts of the Suburban Neighborhoods.

- a) All buildings shall be oriented towards the public or private street in terms of architectural interest and materials and building access.
- b) All buildings shall provide a clearly articulated entry from the public sidewalk at the front elevation.
- c) Driveways should be configured to minimize the reduction of on-street parking spaces.
- d) The site shall be designed with safe pedestrian access to the development from the street and from any parking areas, as well as internal to the site.

- e) Safe pedestrian access from adjacent properties is required. Sidewalks shall extend to the lot line and connect to existing sidewalks on abutting property if feasible.
- f) Plain mansard roofs are prohibited. Decorative mansard roofs are permitted on buildings with a minimum wall height of two (2) stories. (See Figure 15-2: Examples of Decorative Mansard Roofs.)
- g) To avoid the appearance of blank walls facing the street, when the side walls of a dwelling face a street, building facades shall be designed with multiple windows of a size matching those on the front elevation.
- h) Parking Areas and Pedestrian Walkways
 - i. Parking is prohibited between the street line and the front building line. The front building line does not include any architectural features of the front façade. On a corner lot, parking is prohibited within the corner side yard within five (5) feet of the front lot line.
 - ii. Driveways should be consolidated, where possible, in order to reduce curb cuts. Adjacent residential buildings should, where possible, share driveway access.
 - iii. The site shall be designed with safe pedestrian access to the development from the street and from any parking areas, as well as internal to the site.
 - iv. Safe pedestrian access from adjacent properties is required. Sidewalks shall extend to the lot line and connect to existing sidewalks on abutting property if feasible.
 - v. Mid-building pedestrian passages shall be provided through buildings with a width of greater than two-hundred and fifty (250) feet. Such passageways shall be designed to be safe and well-lit, providing convenient pedestrian access to and from areas such as parking lots and structures, and/or service streets from the opposite sides of a building. The passage shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet in width.
 - vi. Driveways and curb cuts shall include clearly marked crosswalks where they intersect with the pedestrian circulation system.
 - vii. Any provided bicycle circulation infrastructure such as dedicated lanes and cycle tracks shall extend to the lot lines.
- i) Building Materials

- i. The following materials are prohibited as the predominant surface finish material in the construction of new multi-family and townhouse developments. However, such materials may be used as part of decorative or detail elements, or as part of the exterior construction, such as a foundation course, that is not used as a predominant surface finish material.
 - (1) Exterior insulation finish systems (EIFS) (e.g. “Dryvit”)
 - (2) Stuccato board
 - (3) Vinyl

There are also additional standards, located in **Article 13, Section 13.3.B.3**, which are applicable to all projects in the Suburban Residential zoning districts which are required to go through the Development Plan and Design Review process. Such projects would be reviewed by the City’s Design Advisory Committee. These standards are generally concerned with ensuring visual interest as well as consistency with the predominant built character of the surrounding neighborhood character. They are listed below:

The following standards shall apply to all sites that meet the applicability thresholds of Section 4.5 Development Plan and Design Review:

- a) Large, flat facades facing the street shall be avoided. Form-giving elements such as, but not limited to, galleries, balconies, projected entrances, and overhangs are required on the street-facing façade.
- b) To ensure that new developments are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood character, consistency in the roofline shall be achieved by using similar roof types, slope, materials and details.
- c) Windows and doors shall have raised elements to create shadow and articulation. In addition, three-dimensional elements, such as balconies and bay windows, shall be incorporated to provide dimensional elements on a façade. Windows shall be set back into or projected out from the façade to provide façade depth and shadow and a consistent style.
- d) Facades shall be designed to be viewed from multiple directions and with consistent materials that wraps around all facades. There shall be a unifying architectural theme for an entire multi-family or townhouse development, utilizing a common vocabulary of architectural forms, elements, materials, and colors around the entire structure.
- e) Unless typical of existing development within the neighborhood, large, monotonous, simple pitched roofs, without breaks in the expanse of the roof, are prohibited. Properly proportioned dormers and gables shall be used to break up large expanses of roof area.

C. What are other standards in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) that impact the design of multi-family residences?

There are additional standards that are widely applicable to multi-family residences, or to any structure greater than a certain size. These standards have the potential to impact the design and performance of any multi-family development.

Article 22, Section 22.4 requires that multifamily residences and townhouses provide one (1) parking space per dwelling unit. Parking areas with ten (10) spaces or more are required, per **Article 23, Section 23.7**, to provide landscaping around the perimeter of the lot along those portions of the lot that abut a public street or a residential use, as well as in the interior of the lot. The interior parking lot landscaping is intended to provide shade for the parking lot as well as an opportunity to mitigate some of the stormwater runoff generated by the increase in impervious surface. **Article 22, Section 22.2.D** also states that any parking spaces over the minimum required number shall be constructed of a pervious material.

Article 23, Section 23.3 states that any multifamily dwelling site which has greater than five thousand square feet (5,000 sf) of impervious surface on it, or which is greater than one acre (1 acre) in size, is required to retain, detain, and filter the first 1.25 inches of stormwater on its site. This performance standard is intended to address issues associated with overwhelmed municipal infrastructure, localized flooding, subsidence, and water quality.

D. What is the timeline for the Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study?

City Council Motion M-16-212 requires the City Planning Commission to hold a public hearing within 60 days of the passage of the motion and to complete the study within 120 days of the passage of the motion. Given these time constraints, shown below are the significant dates and deadlines for the Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study:

June 9, 2016: Motion M-16-212 passed by the City Council

July 26, 2016: City Planning Commission Public Hearing

September 19, 2016: Deadline for written comments

September 20, 2016: Staff Report for the Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study will be made available to the public

September 27, 2016: City Planning Commission consideration of the study

October 7, 2016: Study completion deadline. Recommendation forwarded to the City Council

III. How can the public provide input for the Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study?

Written comments should be addressed to the Executive Director and mailed or delivered to the following address:

City of New Orleans
City Planning Commission
1300 Perdido Street, 7th Floor
New Orleans, LA 70112

Written comments can be emailed to CPCinfo@nola.gov. The deadline for all written comments is Monday, September 19, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

As deemed necessary to complete the study, the City Planning Commission staff will hold meetings with various individuals and groups to receive additional information. Details on all of these meetings will be included in the final Algiers Multi-Family Housing Zoning Standards Study.